

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FAA-00 DOTE-00 AGR-05 FBO-02 A-01

AID-05 SSO-00 ABF-01 /033 W
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O R 251650Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 372

INFO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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AF/W FOR AMBASSADOR EASUM

USIA/IAA FOR DAWSON

BRUSSELS FOR FAA

PASS AID, FAA, FAS/USDA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, PFOR, NI

SUBJECT: FMG REQUISITION OF EMBASSY ANNEX

REF: LAGOS 6768, 6788; STATE 171115; LAGOS 6943

1. SUMMARY: CHARGE INFORMED MEA PROTOCOL (MGBOKWERE) JULY 24 THAT ELSIE FEMI PEARSE (EFP) APARTMENTS ARE VACATED AND READY TO RECEIVE AID OFFICES FROM MOLONEY ANNEX. HE SUGGESTED NEXT STEP WAS TO MEET WITH PERMSEC IYALLA TO DISCUSS FINANCING OF MOVE AND RENT-FREE OCCUPANCY OF OKOTIE-EBOH (O-E) PROPERTY. MGBOKWERE SAID IYALLA LEAVES JULY 27 FOR TEN DAYS IN KAMPALA AND URGED WE BEGIN TO MOVE AID OFFICES NOW AS THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN MEA HAND IN IN SEEKING FMG AGREEMENT TO RENT-FREE OCCUPANCY. CHARGE SAID THAT AS FINANCING AND RENT ARE CRUCIAL POINTS, HE BELIEVED THESE SHOULD BE DISCUSSED NEXT. MGBOKWERE CALLED
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JULY 25 TO REPORT PROGRESS ON ELECTRICITY AND PHONE SERVICE

TO O-E AND REITERATED CALL FOR MOVEMENT OF AID OFFICES TO EFP, EXPRESSING FEAR WE MIGHT RENEGE ON SPITIT OF COOPERATION SET IN EASUM/IYALLA DISCUSSIONS. CHARGE ASSURED HIM THIS WAS NOT THE CASE, CITED CONCRETE ACTIONS TAKEN TO CLEAR EFP AND TENTH FLOOR MOLONEY STREET, SAID HE BELIEVED IT APPROPRIATE TO HAVE AGREEMENT ON EASUM/IYALLA PROPOSALS BEFORE THEY ARE IMPLEMENTED, AND SAID HE WOULD SEEK WASHINGTON GUIDANCE. END SUMMARY.

2. DESPITE HEAVY RAINS DURING PAST TEN DAYS, ELSIE FEMI PEARSE (EFP) APARTMENTS WERE COMPLETELY VACATED BY COB JULY 23 AND ARE READY TO RECEIVE AID OFFICES FROM MOLONEY SNEX. WORK HAS BEGUN ON DISMANTLING OF PARTITIONS ON TENTH FLOOR MOLONEY FOR USE IN EFP, AND SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF EXCESS FURNITURE HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM TENTH FLOOR.

3. HAVING TRIED TO REACH MEA PERMSEC IYALLA BY PHONE JULY 22, 23 AND 24 WITHOUT SUCCESS (ALTHOUGH HE WAS SAID TO BE IN TOWN JULY 23 BUT CLOSETED IN MEETINGS), CHARGE CALLED DEPUTY PERMSEC DOVE-EDWIN JULY 24. DOVE-EDWIN SAID HE HAD NOT BEEN FOLLOWING ANNEX MATTER, BUT HE KNEW IYALLA WAS AWARE WE WERE TRYING TO REACH HIM AND HAD ASKED PROTOCOL OFFICER MGBOKWERE TO SEE WHAT WE WANTED TO DISCUSS. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, MGBOKWERE CALLED. CHARGE REPORTED THAT WE HAD VACATED EFP APARTMENTS AND MADE THEM READY TO RECEIVE AID OFFICES FROM MOLONEY ANNEX. REFERING TO EASUM/IYALLA CONVERSATION OF JULY 12, CHARGE SUGGESTED THAT THE NEXT STEP WOULD BE MEETING WITH IYALLA TO DISCUSS QUESTIONS OF FINANCING OF MOVE AND RENT-FREE OCCUPANCY OF OKOTIE-EBOH UNTIL COMPLETION OF MEW U.S. CHANCERY. MGBOKWERE SUGGESTED THAT AS EFP APARTMENTS WERE READY TO RECEIVE AID, WE SHOULD START TO MOVE NOW. CHARGE SAID THAT WHILE WE WERE READY TO INITIATE THE MOVE, HE THOUGHT THE NEXT STEP SHOULD BE DISCUSSION AND CLARIFICATION OF THE BASIM ELEMENTS OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE MOVE. MGBOKWERE SAID HE HOPED WE WERE NOT BACKING OFF FROM THE COOPERATIVE SPIRIT WITH WHICH THE MATTER HAD BEEN DISCUSSED UP TO THIS POINT; CHARGE ASSURED HIM THIS NOT THE CASE; WE HAD BEEN WORKING HARD ON PERPARATIONS FOR THE MOVE AND HAD PROVIDED AMPLE EVIDENCE OF OUR GOOD FAITH AND COOPERATION. IT WAS SIMPLY THAT TWO PRINCIPAL CONSIDERATIONS REMAINED TO BE SETTLED AND CHARGE THOUGHT THIS WAS THE NEXT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THING TO DO. MGBOKWERE ASKED IF HE SHOULD THEREFORE TELL IYALLA THAT WE REFUSED TO MOVE UNTIL THESE TWO QUESTIONS WERE RESOLVED. CHARGE SAID HE WOULD PREFER MGBOKWERE SIMPLY SAY WE HAD DONE WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD IN CLEARING EFP FOR THE MOVE AND WE BELIEVED THE NEXT STEP WAS DISCUSSION OF THE TWO POIOTS. MGBOKWERE SAID HE WOULD PUT IT THAT WAY. (HARD TO IMAGINE THAT HE WOULD NOT PROVIDE FULL BLOW-BY-BLOW FOR

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 373

INFO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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FLAVOR, BUT ONE CAN NOT TELL).

4. JULY 25 MGBOKWERE CALLED CHARGE AT IYALLA'S INSTRUCTION TO REPORT PROGRESS WITH NEPA ON THREE-PHASE CURRENT AND WITH P&T ON TELEPHONE SERVICE TO OKOTIE-EBOH. HE SAID QUESTION OF RENT-FREE OCCUPANCY WAS BEING PURSUED BUT THAT IN THE MEANTIME IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IF WE PROCEED WITH THE MOVE TO EFP, VACATING FOUR FLOORS OF MOLONEY ANNEX. HE SAID IYALLA WAS VERY BUSY PREPARING FOR OAU SUMMIT AND WILL LEAVE SUNDAY FOR A WEEK OR TEN DAYS. HE ADDED THAT IYALLA WAS ALSO "MAKING ALL EFFORTS ON THE OKOTIE-EBOH MATTER" AND REITERATED THAT "IT WOULD HELP OUR HAND IF YOU ARE SEEN TO BE MOVING OUT OF MOLONEY STREET BUILDING AND INTO EFP". CHARGE OBSERVED THAT WE HAD MOVED SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF DESKS OUT OF MOLONEY AND HAD WORKED TEN DAYS CLEARING EFP; THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE OF PHYSICAL MOVING ACTIVITY AND WE HOPED FMG WOULD APPRECIATE THAT. CHARGE REFERRED AGAIN TO EASUM/IYALLA DISCUSSION JULY 12 AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROPOSAL THAT AMBASSADOR EASCM WOULD TRY SECURE U.S.G. AGREEMENT TO COVER EXPENSES OF MOVE IF IYALLA WOULD TRY TO SECURE FMG AGREEMENT ON RENT-FREE OCCUPANCY OF OKOTIE-BOH. CHARGE OBSERVED THIS WAS CRUX OF AGREEMENT AND HAD NOT YET BEEN SETTLED, W MOVEMENT OF AID TO EFP WOULD AMOUNT TO EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT NOT YET CONCLUDED. MGBOKWERE SAID FMG WOULD NOT APPRECIATE IT IF CONDITIONS WERE NOW REPEAT NOW IMPOSED ON THE MOVE AND WOULD NOT LIKE TO FEEL IT WAS BEING FORCED TO ACT UNDER PRESSURE. CHARGE OBSERVED THAT THE QUESTION OF WHO WAS UNDER PRESSURE IN THIS MATTER WAS APPARENTLY SUSCEPTIBLE TO INTERPRETATION, BUT HE REITERATED AND REASSURED MGBOKWERE THAT U.S.G. IS ACTING IN GOOD FAITH AND WITH GOOD WILL AND HAS EVERY INTENTION OF MOVING FROM MOLONEY ANNEX AS SOON AS CONDITIONS OF MOVE ARE SETTLED. IT WAS LEFT THAT CHARGE WOULD REPORT TO WASHINGTON.

5. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, MGBOKWERE CALLED ADMINISTRATIVE COUNSELOR PIPER TO URGE DESIRABILITY OF OUR MOVING AID OFFICES AND TO EXPRESS FEAR THAT WE MIGHT "RENEGE ON SPIRIT OF COOPERATION ESTABLISHED IN EASUM/IYALLA TALKS". PIPER ALSO ASSURED HIM THIS WAS NOT THE CASE BUT POINTED OUT IMPORTANCE OF FINANCING AND NEED TO ESTABLISH WHETHER O-E WOULD BE RENT-FREE AND IF NOT WHAT THE RENT WOULD BE. HE SPECULATED THAT WE MIGHT PREFER TO MOVE SOME PLACE OTHER THAN O-E IF WE WOULD HAVE TO MOVE FROM THERE AT THE END OF 1976 BECAUSE OF THE COST OF RENTING THE PLACE. MGBOKWERE APPEARED TO UNDERSTAND SOME OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS.

6. COMMENT: WE HAVE COME TO THE BIND IN A VERY TOUGH BARGAIN. MEA CLEARLY SEEKS TO MAKE THE ISSUE ONE OF GOOD FAITH, BUT THEY HAVE SO FAR OFFERED NOTHING BEYOND THE FACT THAT IYALLA WILL TRY TO GET FMG AGREEMENT TO RENT-FREE OCCUPANCY. AS WE SEE IT, IF WE MOVED AID OFFICES FROM MOLONEY WITHOUT AGREEMENT, WE WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT WHATEVER FMG FINALLY DECIDES RE O-E RENT. FMG WOULD HAVE OUR FOUR FLOORS OF MOLONEY, AND WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RETURN. THEY WOULD KNOW WE WERE PREPARED TO FUND THE MOVE, AND THEY MIGHT FEEL THAT SIMPLE PROVISION OF O-E UNTIL OUR CHANCERY IS CONSTRUCTED WOULD BE ENOUGH QUID WITHOUT THE RENT-FREE ELEMENT. SUSPENSION OF MOVE OF REMAINING OFFICES FROM MOLONEY AT THAT POINT

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WOULD BE DIFFICULT IN VIEW FMG OCCUPANCY OF FIVE FLOORS OF THE BUILDING (OUR FOUR PLUS ONE FLOOR THEY HAVE TAKEN

FROM PRIVATE BRITISH FIRM R. C. IRWIN).

7. PRESENT PHYSICAL SITUATION WOULD SEEM TO OFFER BETTER BARGAINING POSSIBILITIES; ESSENTIALLY THE BALL IS IN FMG COURT. HOWEVER, WE ARE FACED WITH UP-COMING TEN-DAY ABSENCE OF IYALLA AND WITH FACT THAT PROJECTED PLAN OUTLINED PARA 6 LAGOS 6633 CALLS FOR INITIATION OF AID OFFICE MOVE TO EFP WITHIN FORTNIGHT AFTER JULY 11. MEA MAY SEEK TO OVERLOOK AMBASSADOR EASUM'S OBSERVATION THAT FMG RESPONSIVENESS, PARTICULARLY OPEN-ENDED RENT-FREE OCCUPANCY OF O-E, WOULD BE KEY FACTOR IN WASHINGTON DECISION RE FINANCING OF MOVE.

8. WASHINGTON COMMENT AND GUIDANCE REQUESTED.
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